

2003 Annual Report

Volunteer of the Year

Each year, one individual is selected as the volunteer of the year for Idaho Operation Lifesaver. This year's recipient is Karl Casperson, Bonneville County Deputy Sheriff. Over the last seven years, Karl gave presentations to over 10,722 people. He has spoken to groups ranging from grade school to senior citizens, with a heavy emphasis on driver education classes. Three 1st place student speech winners received their first safety information from Karl, at their driver education class. In addition to presentations, Karl works a number of safety booths at malls and fairs. Karl has left home early in the morning to give presentations to groups quite a distance away and **(don't tell anybody)** has been known to trade traffic citations for Operation Lifesaver presentations. On behalf of Idaho Operation Lifesaver, we thank Karl Casperson and the Bonneville County Sheriff's Department for his and their dedication to safety and support of Idaho Operation Lifesaver.

Crossing Incidents

During 2003, there were 17 crossing collisions reported in Idaho, resulting in 3 deaths and 6 people injured. Two pedestrian incidents resulting in one fatality also occurred. Indications at this point are that we will experience a reduction compared to last year's total of 20 incidents.

Activities

Presentations and Safety Booths

During 2003, Idaho Operation Lifesaver volunteers contacted over 110,328 people at 439 presentations, and fair and mall safety booths, regarding the potential dangers that exist at highway/ rail grade crossings and around trains in general. Presentations were given to groups ranging from preschool to senior citizens, including professional drivers and new drivers.

Besides the county fairs and safety booths, Idaho Operation Lifesaver had booths at the 2 state fairs and, along with the Federal Railroad Administration, staffed a booth at the Spokane Interstate Fair. At these three fairs, the news media participated, announcing the winner of the train set giveaway and giving a nightly safety tip. As is custom, following the large state fairs all volunteers' names are placed in a box and one name is drawn for a train set. In Spokane, the winner was Bill Perry with the Federal Railroad Administration, at the Western Idaho Fair the winner was Richard Burch from Boise Police Department, and the Eastern Idaho State Fair winner was Pocatello volunteer Bruce Duncan.

Street Safety Train

The Idaho Operation Lifesaver street train participated in a number of parades and special events with great success. We estimate over 300,000 people received the Operation Lifesaver message via this tool. The parade train, while a great hit with the crowds at parades and riders during special events, also receives extensive media coverage.

Media Coverage

Idaho Operation Lifesaver receives nightly coverage during the state fairs on the evening news. News organizations continue doing stories concerning safety at railroad tracks and around railroad property. These stories have been positive and helpful in spreading the Operation Lifesaver message. Idaho Operation Lifesaver ran one PSA campaign from January to March, with another slated for December.

Enforcement

This year, 6 "Officer On A Train" enforcement runs have been completed. Where enforcement runs have been difficult to arrange, the emphasis has been on law enforcement officers enforcing traffic laws in their area via the "Adopt A Crossing" method.

Student Speech Contest

The Idaho driver's education speech contest for high school students is an ongoing event. The 2003 winner was Amanda Matthew's from Idaho Falls. Amanda represented Idaho at the Region 8 Workshop, giving her presentation and input at the various meetings. The 2004 Speech winner will represent Idaho at the National Symposium in San Antonio Texas.

Volunteer Recruitment

We are continuing to attract new presenters, from law enforcement

agencies and the private sector. This is an ongoing effort, as we need to increase our presenter pool statewide. We are also in need of 3 Area Coordinators in Southeast Idaho and one more for North Idaho.

During 2003, two presenter-training classes were held, one in North Idaho and one in Boise, resulting in 30 new presenters and volunteers. Three more training classes are scheduled for late February and early March, one in North Idaho and two in the southern part of the state.

2004 National Symposium

The National Symposium will be held during July in San Antonio Texas. As much as we would like to send everyone, due to the cost, we will only be able to send two presenters and spouses from Idaho.

Criteria for one individual selected to go will include the amount of participation in activities and presentations, and involvement in the success of the speech contest in their region.

The other individual selected will be the person who works with this year's state speech winner. The individuals selected to represent us at the national symposium will be notified in May.

Good luck to all of you.

Region 8 Workshop

The 2003 Region 8 Workshop was held at Depoe Bay Oregon. Approximately 20 people from Idaho, including the student speech

winner, were able to attend the workshops.

Board Member Retires

E. Lee Wilson, Idaho Operation Lifesaver board member and volunteer representing the Idaho Transportation Department retired after 34 years with the Transportation Department this year and stepped down from this organization's Board of Directors effective November 30, 2003. Lee has been active with Idaho Operation Lifesaver since 1974, a 30 year stretch.

Lee and his wife Mary, who has served as Secretary to the Board for the last 10 years, have contributed hundreds of personal hours and funds volunteering and working with Idaho Operation Lifesaver in the last 30 years.

Upon retiring from the Transportation Department this year, Lee and Mary plan on some travelling, with one scheduled trip to Australia next year. Lee assures us that their travels will not interfere with his volunteering at the state fair in Boise, and that he will continue to work with Operation Lifesaver for many years to come.

On behalf of all of us, I thank both Lee and Mary for their contributions to this organization, wish them a happy retirement, and can definitely assure them their offer to continue being Idaho Operation Lifesaver volunteers will be honored.

Our Friends Departure

It saddens me to inform you of the passing of two of our friends and fellow Idaho Operation Lifesaver volunteers presenters.

Chuck LaBeause

Chuck LaBeause, from Athol, passed away in September. Chuck was a presenter since 1995 and served as area coordinator for many years in North Idaho.

Doug Herrmann

Doug Herrmann from Idaho Falls passed away on the 30th of the December following complications during surgery. Doug who retired from the INEEL on December 3, 2003 has been a presenter since 1995.

Our prayers and thoughts go out to their families.

Idaho Web Site

Tonya Clark from the Idaho Public Utilities Commission has developed a web site for the organization. The site will list Area Coordinators, current incident statistics for Idaho, mileage reimbursement rates and other pertinent information. *Eventually, we also hope to have the presenter report form on the site, allowing presenters to fill in the required information and sending it directly to the state office for down loading.* For those that do not have access to the Internet, presentation report forms may continue to be sent to the state office.

The web site can be accessed at www.puc.state.id.us then click on rail.

New Board Member

Joe Peagler is the new Highway Rail Safety Specialist at the Department of Transportation and will serve on the Operation Lifesaver Board. Joe, a retired Marine Colonel who worked in the office of Highway Safety for the last 5 years, plans on attending our

next certification class and becoming an Operation Lifesaver presenter.

Carol Gabbard, one of our new presenters from the Idaho Public Utilities Commission has been selected to serve as Secretary to the Board of Directors.

Volunteer Expense Reimbursement

In an effort to expedite reimbursements of volunteer expenses, Carol Gabbard has agreed to help with handling all expense claims for Idaho Operation Lifesaver. Starting in January, all volunteer mileage expenses and bills will be sent to her for payment. Enclosed with this mailing are expense forms for all volunteers to use. Carol's Address is:

Carol Gabbard
Idaho Public Utilities Commission
P.O. Box 83720
Boise, ID 83720-0074
Phone (208) 334-0334

Idaho's Goals For 2004.

1. Continue the Speech Contest
2. Conduct 2 media campaigns
3. Conduct 8 Officer on a train runs statewide
4. Broaden the Adopt a Crossing program statewide
5. Continue to increase presentations to driving age people
6. Involve the parade train in as many events as possible
7. Staff the 2 state fairs, county fairs, and 5 mall booths, assist with the Spokane Interstate Fair.
8. Continue increasing the presenter pool statewide
9. Continue reducing the number of crossing incidents that occur in Idaho

State Contacts

Chris Arvas, State Coordinator
208-236-5626 or 208-705-5626

North Idaho Coordinator
Detective Sgt. Phyllis Jay
208-263-8417 x 214

Randy Martz, - Lewiston/Moscow
509-758-8389

Grant Baxter, Fruitland/Payette
208-452-3916

Bob Adams, Emmett
208-365-6353

June Hickenbotham, Nampa
208-465-2311

Mike Anderson, Boise
208-386-5515

Loyd Overlin, Twin Falls
208-733-8188

Bruce Duncan, Pocatello
208-232-0413

State Coordinator's Comments

I wish to thank each of you for your time and contributions to Idaho Operation Lifesaver during 2003. The continuing decline of car train crashes at Idaho's highway rail grade crossings is the result of your combined efforts, dedication and sacrifice. This is a tribute to all of you.

During 1990, Idaho experienced 88 car train collisions. In 2003 we are down to 17 reported incidents. On behalf of the many citizens of this state who have not been involved in a car train collision, I thank you for your support, contributions and time dedicated to this cause and wish you and your families a safe and happy 2004.

Chris Arvas, State Coordinator

State Meeting Dates

February 12 – Boise

May 6 – Boise

November 4 – Boise

Boise Red Lion Downtowner

Those wishing to attend should call
Chris or Carol to reserve a seat.